



Item 11 **Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins**

Statements



3rd joint meeting of the Working Group on IWRM and Working Group
on Monitoring and Assessment (26-28 April 2021)



Statements by:

- Edouard BOINET, INBO
- Cong NGUYEN DINH, MRC Secretariat
- Andreas REUMANN, Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Intervention of INBO, represented by Mr. Edouard BOINET

At the 16th meeting of the IWRM working group and the working group monitoring & assessment of the Water Convention, the secretariat of which is provided by UNECE

*Agenda item 11 :
Adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins*

Tuesday April 27, 15.15 - 15.40

Subject of intervention :

Activities carried out within the framework of the Global Basin Network working on climate change, including the results of the fifth meeting of the Network (Geneva, February 26, 2021).

Text of the intervention:

Since its **creation in 2013**, the Global Network of basins working on adaptation to climate change is jointly steered by the UNECE and the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO).

17 transboundary basin organizations from **Africa, South America, Asia and Europe** are members of the network.

Its objective is to promote the cooperative management of transboundary basins as **an essential tool** for adaptation to climate change.

States, but also traditional donors and climate finance donors must constantly be reminded that planning and implementing adaptation actions at the scale of transboundary basins is both **more economical and more efficient**. Why? Well, for example:

- The **sharing of information and hydrometeorological data** between riparian States makes it possible to reduce the uncertainty associated with climate adaptation decision-making,
- The **joint planning** allows to ideally locate major flood control infrastructure projects where they will have maximum effect (and sometimes, this ideal location is not in the territory of one's own State but in the territory of one other riparian State).

To these actors (States, donors), this network is therefore a relay of the **voice of basin organizations**. But above all, it is a unique platform that allows to share experiences, to learn from each other and to establish contacts between basins and experts, to discuss the challenges faced, the lessons learned and the solutions that must be developed

The **5th meeting** of the Global Network of Basins working on adaptation to climate change, which was held on February 26, addressed the topic of "**Strategies and plans** for climate change adaptation" with one question : how to develop, finance and implement them ?

Through case studies, the organizations in charge of the cooperative management of the transboundary basins of the Amazon, Danube, Mekong, Meuse and Niger rivers as well as of Lake Victoria were able to provide their answers.

This special online edition attracted a larger number of participants than previous sessions, with 120 participants from 75 countries. The interactive question and answer sequences with the speakers were therefore particularly dynamic.

It also marked the rallying of new basin organizations, and not the least, with for example the intervention of the Amazonian Cooperation Treaty Organization (OTCA).

As part of the preparation of the 5th meeting, INBO and UNECE collected from members of the network the information on climate change adaptation progress in their respective basins. This 2021 report is available online.

The network is continuing its work to **build the capacities** of transboundary basin organizations to finance their climate change adaptation projects **through training** as well as through the **continuous promotion of publications** (such as the co-publication of the manual "Financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins: Preparing bankable projects", with the World Bank and the African Development Bank).

INBO shares with UNECE the will to contribute to the emergence of **operational projects** of adaptation, as demonstrated by the Water Convention Secretariat's projects **in the basins of Niemen, Dniester and Drin**.

For its part, INBO is now implementing through its incubation platform (launched in 2016 at COP22) the "**100 water and climate projects for Africa**" initiative. Collaboration with the UNECE is invaluable in carrying out this ambitious approach that aims to accelerate project development.

The 2022-2024 work program of the Water Convention gives an important place to its **program area n°4** on adaptation to climate change.

The UNECE can count on INBO, both for the steering of the platform (through events, publications and training) and for the development and implementation of pilot projects for adaptation to climate change in the border areas (Chu-Talas, the Dniester, the Bug-Neman, the Tisza or Sava).

Intervention by Mr. Cong Nguyen Dinh

Mekong River Commission is an active member of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation that taken lead by the Water Convention. With the network's activities, a lot of information and lessons learned have been shared amongst the members. This is very important for the Mekong River Commission to perform our mandates in term of climate change and make a strong linkage between us to the international climate change community for the water resources. The trainings provided by the Water Convention is also useful for our commission.

Transboundary risk of climate change is critical issue in the Mekong basin. The commission has developed a climate change adaptation strategy and action plan to set out the priorities and actions at its basin level, to address climate change risks and strengthen basin-wide resilience. One of priority of the strategy is climate change mainstreaming. Climate change is integrated into the basin development strategy for 2021-2030.

At a national level, mainstreaming regional climate change adaptation into national action and activities have been addressed. The commission is working closely with national agencies to support this ongoing effort and will continue to review and refine its approach based on lessons learned and the needs of Member Countries.

There are several opportunities for regional cooperation, such as joint projects, regional capacity building, data and information sharing, joint systems, tools and processes, and the national application of regional frameworks and guidelines. We focus on enhancing flood and drought forecasting by implementing an early warning system, monitoring and management, building capacity and implementing joint projects and measures.

Transboundary adaptation projects are very important for our future. The Mekong River Commission intensifies focus on them.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Independent Evaluation Unit of the Green Climate Fund, the evaluation of the GCF's adaptation approach and the GCF investments in the SIDS.

The GCF as largest climate fund uses 8 result areas to classify its 173 projects according to their mitigation and adaptation results.

Water management and security related aspects are most often captured by the adaptation result areas "Health, food and water security" (e.g. efficient irrigation systems) and "infrastructure and built environment" (e.g. sea and river flood walls).

Both evaluations showed several learnings from the GCF investments:

- SIDS face numerous climate impacts, not only rising sea levels, changing weather patterns, floods and droughts but also growing vulnerability in freshwater resources, food security and resulting increase in water and food prices.
- Water is one of the key potential impacts described in all FPs and also a sectorial priority described across SIDS's NDCs. In fact 2/3 of SIDS NDCs refer to water.
- While energy and water might look like easy fits for the business model of the GCF, the stakeholders have identified several factors that hamper the GCF investments in adaptation and also in particular in vulnerable countries like the SIDS
- Lack of capacity in the countries to develop concept notes and proposals
- Need for more emphasis on support for regional DAEs as they are promising partners in climate action
- high transactions costs, in particular in the preparation/provision of climate data
- need for a programmatic approach to climate change action both within the country (meaning across sectors) and across regions (to address transboundary issues).